Probe into Rajdhani Express accident

439. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have ordered a probe into the accident of Rajdhani Express coming to New Delhi from Howrah, due to collapse of bridge on the Dhabe river at Rafiganj;

(b) if so, whether Government have since received the enquiry report;

(c) if so, what was the prime reason of the accident; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to prevent such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Commissioner of Railway Safety/ Eastern circle has conducted his statutory inquiry into the accident of Rajdhani Express on 9.9.2002.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Commissioner of Railway Safety/Eastern Circle has finalized the cause of accident as "opening of fish plates and elastic rail clips of the cess side single rail in Howrah end approach of Bridge No.445 by miscreants". The accident has been classified in the category of "Sabotage".

(d) (i) Action to prevent sabotage to track and bridges, is to be taken by the respective State Governments. Railway lodges FIR in such cases. Security patrolling in specified stretches for a limited duration, is also introduced, if specifically requested by the State Government.

(ii) As a precautionary measure, instructions have been issued to reduce the number of fish plate joints, wherever feasible and for burring of two fish bolts, one on each rail, at joints located in the stretches considered vulnerable.

(iii) Efforts are also being made to develop an anti-theft elastic rail clip and fish bolt fastening.

Metre gauge lines in Tamil Nadu

440. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the length of metre gauge rail lines is more in Tamil Nadu especially in Thanjavur region, as compared to other parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the proposals of Government and the financial allocations for early conversion of those metre gauge rail lines into broad gauge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) As per the latest available figures (as on 31.3.2001), the total length of metre gauge rail lines (route kilometres) in Tamil Nadu is 2145 kms which forms 14.3% of the total metre gauge route kilometres of All Indian Railways. Region-wise data of route kilometres, within a State, is not maintained.

(b) The details of ongoing gauge conversion projects, in the State of Tamil Nadu, are as under:—

S. No.	Name of Projects	Length (in kms.)	Budget outlay for 2002-03 (Rs. in crores)
1.	Thanjavur-Villupuram	192	5
2.	Trichy-Manamadurai	150	2
3.	Quilon-Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur, Tenkasi-Virdhunagar	357	25
4.	Cuddalore-Salem	191	15
5.	Trichy-Nagore-Karikkal	200	13
6.	Villupuram-Katpadi	161	1
7.	Villupuram-Pondicherry	37	10
8.	Madurai-Rameswaram	161	5